

## George Washington Campbell to Andrew Jackson, December 24, 1811, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### GEORGE W. CAMPBELL TO JACKSON.

Washington, December 24, 1811.

*Dear Sir,* . . . . The public prints will give you the ordinary proceedings of both houses. By these you will see we are raising *large regular* armies, and making preparations for *war* , and talking a great deal about *taking Canada* etc. Some are in earnest in all this, and others, it is believed are not. The Government, no doubt, mean what the message of the Executive stated to the nation, that it is high time to take a firm position and maintain it, though war should be the consequence. From present appearances it is extremely difficult to perceive how war can be avoided, without degrading the national character, still lower, than it now is, which certainly cannot be desirable. For there is no ground to expect G. Britain will abandon her system of depredation on our commerce, or her habitual violations of the personal rights of our citizens in the impressment of our seamen. It is understood and believed here, that Mr. Foster<sup>1</sup> has no powers, whatever to negotiate respecting those great subjects of complaint on our part, unless it be to receive propositions, and forward them to his Court, and it is probable, our Government will make no further propositions to that nation unless she changes her course of measures towards us by revoking her orders etc. violating our neutral rights. under these circumstances the prospect is very gloomy, and a rupture between the two countries seems more than probable. To prepare for such event is certainly the duty of Congress. There is no doubt, at present, but the regular military force, will be increased to, 25,000, men, or more, authority will also be given to raise volunteers, call out the militia etc.—probably merchant vessels will be permitted to arm, and our present naval force, filled out and prepared for service, but what will be the

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final result of all this cannot, at present, be determined—many, who vote for, armies, a navy, and all other expenditures that are proposed will vote against war with England!!—time alone will develop *their views* . . . .

1 Augustus J. Foster was British minister to the United States. He was received by Madison on July 2, 1811.